

## EDITORIAL

### HELPING FORWARD YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD.

Like all other wide-awake farm papers, The Progressive Farmer believes in big crops, well-kept farms, good stock, improved implements—in everything that makes for good farming. But (unlike some other farm papers) our interest does not stop here. We believe that it is a greater thing to make a life than to make a living, and that the farm paper should be as much interested in promoting rural comfort and intelligence and beauty as in promoting the mere material prosperity of the country. The city has grown at the expense of the country heretofore because of the isolation of the farm and not because the city offers better opportunities for accumulating wealth—for there is, in fact, far more want and squalid poverty in our urban than in our rural districts. We cannot remake the country by increasing the size of the crops or the prices of crops; it can only be done by making country life more beautiful and attractive. As Dr. Liberty H. Bailey has said, "A flower plot in the front yard will do more to keep the boy on the farm than will an extra bushel of potatoes in the cellar."

And so The Progressive Farmer keeps hammering away at its hobbies—good roads, good schools, rural mail delivery, the rural telephone, school libraries, more newspapers, farmers' clubs, prettier houses, more flowers, more pictures, etc., etc. Our old subscribers have heard about these things very often, but we have received more than a thousand new subscribers since January 1st, and this number of The Progressive Farmer also goes to a goodly list of farmers who are not now subscribers, but ought to be. We cannot fail therefore to improve the opportunity of reminding our present audience of these important movements for the uplift of country life.

Any township which has good roads, good schools, rural mail delivery, school libraries, the rural telephone, farmers' clubs, and a good newspaper in every farmer's home—well, in such a neighborhood a man can live twice as long in five years as he could in a slow, unprogressive community without these advantages. In a neighborhood making these improvements, land will increase in price; neighbors will be more neighborly; there will be more contentment—fuller lives; the neighborhood will win a reputation for intelligence and enterprise that will make its residents proud of their citizenship; and a new and stately type of man will be developed—men broadened by a closer touch with the world of men and business and letters, but without the bustle and grind that keep the city man a slave to business, living a superficial life.

And there's no reason, kind reader, why your neighborhood should not have most of these advantages, if not all of them.

If your roads are not what they should be, start an agitation for a county road tax or for a county bond issue. If you make good roads, they will be of no less benefit to the next generation than to this, and there's no reason why the next should not pay part of the expense. In all the more populous counties of the State it is certain that the road tax would be less expensive than the mud tax. And if you cannot get as good roads as you would like, do not let that keep you from gettings as good roads as you can. We are afraid that our good roads advocates have not laid enough emphasis on the improvement of ordinary earth roads. Dr. J. H. Pratt set forth the right sort of philosophy in his recent article in The Progressive Farmer:

"Where possible, macadamized roads should be made, even if only a mile a year can be con-

structed. In the western counties of North Carolina there is an ample supply of stone for this purpose, but in the eastern counties where the surface of the country is nearly level, stone for macadamizing purposes is scarce, or entirely lacking. These counties, however, do have means at hand, with which they can improve their roads with a small expenditure of money. Many of the sandy roads can be greatly improved by the admixture of clay, which is often to be found directly alongside of the road. Where the road-bed is of a clayey nature, it can often be improved by the admixture of sand and gravel; and wherever such roads are crossed by streams, sand and gravel can nearly always be obtained."

And then no doubt something can be done for the improvement of your schools. Wherever practicable, the public school term should be lengthened by private subscriptions. Consolidation of districts leads to many advantages and should be effected wherever it can be accomplished without really serious inconvenience to patrons. Every school should have a library and if your county has not already reached the legal limit for State aid, you should at once take steps to establish one in connection with your school. Money expended in putting some of the world's choicest literary treasures within reach of the boys and girls of the neighborhood will do more to quicken their interest in the school and to stimulate them to worthy endeavor and useful lives than would be possible through any other expenditure of the money. Take an interest in the work of the teacher and the school committee; do all that you can to help them and to make them feel that their good acts are appreciated and their shortcomings not unnoticed. And every farmer ought to be interested in having the new text-book, "Agriculture for Beginners," properly used in the school-room. This is a pioneer effort toward making our schools educate for practical things and through practical things and toward bringing the children to see that education can be applied to work in the field and orchard as well as to work in the store and the counting-room. Much depends on its success.

The neighborhood with good schools and good roads, however, will yet be lacking in efficiency and public intelligence of there is not a good newspaper in every home. And by a good newspaper we mean a paper that is interested in making men better and the world better—a paper clean in character and progressive in spirit. A paper that is interested only in reporting sensational news will be of no value. A paper filled with cheap stories will not help the home to which it goes. A paper whose sole aim is to help its clique of politicians into office is not needed. But a paper which will stimulate a man to use more progressive methods and to think soberly will in the course of years do more to educate that man than would a year in college without the paper. There is no better way of helping forward your neighborhood than by putting good papers into homes now without them.

Rural mail delivery is another inestimable advantage of these latter years. And the Government is spending millions every year to carry it to communities hitherto without it. If you have made no effort to get the service for your neighborhood, you should not delay action longer. It requires some time for an application to be acted on after it is filed with the Department at Washington, and the earlier your petition is presented the earlier will it have attention.

Lastly (for we expressed ourselves at length on the rural telephone last week), you ought to have a farmers' club—a Sub Alliance, we think—meeting regularly once or twice a month at your school-house. With such a club, meaning united

action for your farmers, it will be easy to help forward any movement for improving your roads, schools or mail facilities, introducing improved methods, and bringing many other things to pass that it would be impossible to accomplish without concert of action.

These are some of the things that the leaders in every rural neighborhood should set themselves to bring about. Talk them over with your neighbors; get them acquainted with the merits of the several measures, and then proceed to action.

If you wish further information, it will not be hard to get. It will give The Progressive Farmer great pleasure to render any assistance in its power and to advise you as to any difficulties that may present themselves. If you wish literature on good roads or advice as to improving the roads of your particular section, write Prof. J. A. Holmes, State Geologist, Chapel Hill, N. C. If you wish to get the rules for establishing a rural mail delivery route, form of petition, etc., write to your Senator or Representative in Congress. For information about school-house improvement, local taxation, consolidation of districts, or school libraries, write your country school superintendent or Superintendent J. Y. Joyner, Raleigh, N. C. If you would like to know more as to the rural telephone system, The Progressive Farmer will endeavor to get the information for you. And Secretary T. B. Parker, Raleigh, N. C., is always ready to answer inquiries as to the organization of Sub Alliances.

Why not begin right now to wage a campaign in behalf of these neighborhood reforms? The good that you yourself will receive will be worth all that it will cost you, while you will be doing your community a patriotic service of more lasting benefit than the services of many a man who poses as a statesman and has the "Honorable" prefix to his name.

### THIS WEEK'S PAPER—SOME RANDOM COMMENT.

Entomologist Sherman is merely clearing the way for his future articles on insect pests. Our farmers lose heavily every year by insect ravages, and Mr. Sherman's letters cannot fail to be helpful to those whose crops and orchards have suffered.

The corn planting season is now at hand and this lends timeliness to Mr. C. B. Williams' letter on the variety tests on North Carolina soils and the best ways of buying. His advice to buy only in the ear should never be forgotten. It is the only way in which the buyer has a chance to protect himself against fraud. Next week Mr. Williams will present an illustrated article of great practical value on the selection of seed corn in the crib—size and shape of ear to select, size and shape of grain, size of cob, what part of ear seed should be taken from, etc.

Among our other agricultural articles, are reports of the progress of farm work in the mountains and on the coast; a timely warning against rushing into the fields before the ground dries off; an especially striking article by Dr. Burkett on the waste in using cottonseed meal as a fertilizer only instead of first as a feed and then as a fertilizer; and an expert dairyman's protest against some "old foggy" practices in managing cows. We join "D. C." in the request that Dr. Butler give our readers a series of articles on the common diseases of live stock.

Over on our Social Chat page is one of the most valuable articles in this number, Dr. H. F. Freeman's letter on a well-house for keeping milk and butter and fresh meats in summer. It is a convenience that no home should be without, and we hope that the good women who read the article will not let their husbands rest until more of these well-houses are built. There are other valuable features of this number, but we haven't space to notice them here. All in all, we are sure the reader will get his two cents' worth—the paper by the year costs a little less than two cents a week. And remember that you can't afford to do without the paper and we can't afford to do without the two cents.